



COMMENT



THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Ward 1's low voter turnout a real shame

Higher than usual voter turnout in the advance polls showed such promise leading up to Monday's election.

But it was all for naught as the overall turnout ended up being 3 per cent lower than the 2000 municipal election.

It was particularly disappointing to see the low voter turnout in the town's fastest-growing area — Ward 1.

As reported elsewhere in this newspaper, only 22 per cent of Ward 1's 6,252 eligible voters cast a ballot on the biggest day Milton's seen in years.

Ward 2 experienced the highest voter turnout with 37 per cent, and in Wards 3 and 4, 33 per cent of voters cast ballots.

Overall, the voter turnout wasn't great at 35 per cent, but Ward 1's 22 per cent was dismal. In fact, it was that low figure that pushed the overall voter count below the 38 per cent turnout three years ago.

And it begs the question, why was it so low?

Could it be that many of the new residents don't feel connected to the community and therefore didn't see the significance of voting?

We don't know the answer, but we do know it's a shame that 78 per cent of the voters didn't have a say in electing the representatives who will be making important decisions for the town over the next three years — decisions that will directly affect them.

My feelings about politics changed Monday night

I've never been terribly interested in politics.

I've always done my duty by voting, but politics has just never seemed particularly captivating to me.

Now, I'm a changed woman.

Covering my first election was exciting and amended my view on the word 'politics'. Now, instead of envisioning a bunch of bylaws and meetings, I see the human drama involved.

Nothing better illustrates that than my time Monday night at Hugh Foster Hall, where most of the candidates — as well as family and friends and some of the public — waited for the results to come in.

For those of you who were there with me, you know exactly what went on. For those who weren't, let me set the stage for you.

Trust me, it was better than any soap opera — although this drama didn't hit you square

between the eyes. You had to look for it.

When I first walked in at about 7:30 p.m., people were just starting to arrive. Twenty-year-old Andrew Garrod, who was running for Ward 1 councillor, was there dressed to the nines. Instantly I felt proud that Milton was a place where a young person felt free to run as a candidate. I was proud that my generation was represented on the team of candidates. I think it's just as important to recognize young people who are doing something worthwhile as those who all-too-often appear in The Champion's weekly police blotter.

As the room started to fill up, it was interesting to note the attitudes of candidates. Some sauntered in, confident of their eventual win, while others tried to make themselves less noticeable, freely admitting their nervousness.

The fact that there was such a vast assortment



OUR READERS WRITE

Reader says man's thank-you gesture for selling poppies was quite unexpected and heart-warming

Dear Editor:

While selling Remembrance Day poppies recently, a generous stranger came up and commented on the fact that he appreciated me for taking the time to stand there and sell poppies.

After a short period of time, he returned with three pretty candles for me in appreciation of my volunteer service. I was shocked. What a touching and thoughtful gesture.

I want to thank all those service men and women — my father being

one of them — for their gift of freedom. Also, thanks to all the people who work for and support the poppy campaign, and thanks to a caring and thoughtful stranger.

B. Mitchell
Milton

Scott Early golf tournament a big success: committee

Dear Editor:

We would like to thank all the golfers, hole sponsors, prize donors, dinner guests and especially the volunteers who generously contributed to the success of the fourth annual Scott Early Foundation Golf Tournament.

A special thank-you goes out once again to Jack

Manchisi of J&D Tire for his continued generosity and donations.

To date, the Scott Early Foundation has raised \$90,600, which has been able to assist many individuals in our community.

Thanks again to all who helped.

Scott Early Foundation Committee

E-mail all your letters to the editor to miltomed@haltonsearch.com.



Around town

with STEPHANIE THIESSEN

of candidates made my people-watching even better. When was the last time you've seen a priest waiting anxiously for the results alongside a university student?

While we had most of the results el pronto thanks to the computerized system that tallied the votes, there was a delay with Ward 4's numbers from Bishop Reding Secondary School. The

delay of nearly an hour seemed to magnify whatever it was candidates were feeling.

I watched one candidate — who was later elected councillor — as she refused to accept the many congratulations she was being given, not wanting to count her chickens before they hatched, since the last polling station's votes still weren't in.

I watched another candidate vehemently express his disappointment and the frustration he felt about losing by 50 votes. But he didn't lose. When all the votes were in, it was revealed that he had won the position for which he was running.

The human drama that unfolded throughout the night was Oscar-worthy. And though I wasn't as excited as my fellow reporter Jason Misner — who looked like a kid on Christmas morning — it certainly was a great experience.